

windows in churches which are in any other style than that of mediæval architecture, I am quite willing to submit to it. A. Z.

APPROPOS TO OUR FUTURE NATIONAL GALLERY.

THAT another building for a National Gallery will ere long be erected there can be little doubt; wherefore it would not be even now at all premature were architects to begin to give their attention to a subject which lies out of the course of their usual studies,—one for which no perfectly satisfactory model is to be found, and relative to which very little information is to be derived either from architectural books or others. Of course, no one can shape out a design definitively beforehand, without knowing the extent of accommodation that will be asked for, or the site of the structure, and sundry other particulars; still architects may and ought to be prepared beforehand with ideas which can be afterwards embodied by them, whenever they shall be formally called upon to do so. Careful study of the subject generally ought to precede the making out an individual design, more especially if the subject itself be so remote from every-day practice and routine as is a public picture-gallery. It is, therefore, or ought to be, fortunate that time is afforded for giving it deliberate consideration. And perhaps Government would do well, as a preliminary step, to employ some one to visit and report upon the principal existing galleries abroad, carefully noting their respective defects or recommendations. Although we may not be able to ensure complete success, let us at least take the course most likely to secure it; so that if we are to fail, let it not be attributable to heedlessness and hurry, which, so far from any valid excuse, are in themselves utterly inexcusable where any public work of importance is at stake. In all probability, our public buildings generally would be far more satisfactory than they are were longer time allowed for preparing designs; and although committees do not appear at all to suspect it, there is a wide difference between merely getting up a set of competition drawings, and producing a thoroughly considered and matured design. As matters are usually managed, architects are compelled to send in their first ideas unreviewed; indeed, to suppose the contrary, would be anything but charitable towards many whose designs when executed betray strange negligences and a degree of carelessness not otherwise to be accounted for, save by imputing them to incapacity which has done its best—to incapacity which would not be tolerated were the public, and those who in such cases decide for the public, less ignorant of architecture, or else less indifferent to its interests.

Irrelevant as the immediately preceding remarks may be deemed to the question of a new National Gallery, they may at least be excused as serviceable,—as pointing out the root, and exposing the vicious system, from which our architectural failures in the majority of our public works arise. Not only is very insufficient time allowed architects for the due preparation of designs,—unless, indeed, they happen to be quite disengaged at the moment,—but similar disastrous hurry shows itself in the selecting one from those sent in; nor is anything suffered to transpire relative to that stage,—and most assuredly it is not the least important one,—of an architectural competition. Those who act as judges on such occasions are allowed to be totally irresponsible. They may or may not be competently qualified for the delicate office they undertake, their decision may have been conscientious or the contrary; but the capability of self-constituted judges, and the judiciousness of their decisions, will ever be exposed to awkward and ugly suspicions, so long as the veil of secrecy is allowed to be thrown over them.

With regard to another structure for the purpose of a National Gallery, much greater surface of wall ought to be provided than is afforded in the present rooms, where half as much again is required for properly disposing the same number of same-sized pictures. A permanent gallery—be it a public or a private one—ought not to have the air of an ordinary

exhibition-room, so called, perhaps, upon the principle of *lucus à non lucendo*, one half of the performances hung up in it being exhibited only by titles being printed in the catalogue. Another point which deserves serious consideration beforehand—although, indeed, it seems hardly to demand any at all—is whether, in a new structure for the purpose, provision ought to be made for systematic arrangement or classification of the subjects. Besides the usual and more obvious mode of classification according to schools, there ought to be some regard paid to tolerable uniformity of size in paintings hung up together in the same room. Nay, it is highly desirable to go much farther, and adopt a principle which has hitherto been either strangely overlooked, or else as strangely disregarded, that of classifying or subdividing the classification of pictures according to their subjects, so as to avoid the chaotic and Babel-like confusion which, in that respect, is now allowed to prevail. Nor is it sufficient distinction to have pictures marshalled as “historical,” “landscape,” &c. because even such technical division of subjects affords no security against startling incongruities. It was but the other day that a correspondent of *The Times* animadverted on the scandal of making a “Virgin and Child” and a “Venus and Adonis” *pendants* or companion pictures. Yet such is the case more or less in every collection: subjects of the most opposite nature, and which, if they affect the mind at all, except according to the artistic power displayed in them, must necessarily excite very different emotions, are frequently brought into the closest proximity, as if it were intended that they should operate as antidotes to neutralise each other. Sacred and profane, poetical and familiar, pathetic and comic, imaginative and mere matter of fact subjects are mingled together without distinction. Even in landscape there ought to be regard paid to classification. Ideal compositions in that branch of the art ought to be kept separate from views which profess to be portraits of particular spots.

Few private collections are of such extent as to admit of attempt at such classification of subjects; neither is it to be looked for in a temporary exhibition of pictures, want of time for making it rendering it there impossible. But in a permanent national collection it surely ought to be observed; and the adoption of it would confer upon our future National Gallery a decided superiority in that respect over all existing ones. In a library, works upon utterly dissimilar subjects, or else of quite dissimilar character, may be placed together without any obvious incongruousness. Upon a bookshelf, “*Comus*” and “*The Beggars’ Opera*” might stand together in amicable contact, they being read neither simultaneously nor consecutively. But between a *Bibliotheca* and a *Panthecon* there is this wide difference, that the works contained in the latter are *perused*—that is, viewed, if not exactly simultaneously, consecutively and immediately so. Unlike books, the subjects—and the moral character, so to speak—of pictures, make themselves evident at a glance; wherefore the hanging together on the same wall, as has been done ere now, the ascetic and the voluptuous—Virgins and Venuses—is, if not highly indecent, at least exceedingly indecorous and inconsiderate.

The systematic classification of pictures according to subjects that ought to be observed in what ought to be made a *Museum of Painting*, would, perhaps, be less agreeable to the idle and vulgar curiosity of the “million,” than is the present higgledy-piggledy system of variety. Yet, most assuredly, it would greatly facilitate study, which—and not a mere taste for sight-seeing—a National Gallery is intended, it may be presumed, or ought to be presumable, to facilitate and promote.

Q. E. D.

STATUS TO DR. JENNER.—An influential committee has been formed for the purpose of erecting a colossal bronze statue to the memory of Dr. Jenner, to be placed in a public situation in London.

ON THE WORKS OF THE STUDENTS IN THE VARIOUS SCHOOLS OF ORNAMENTAL ART EXHIBITED AT MARLBOROUGH HOUSE.

THE following is a Report on an inspection of the Works of the Students in the various Schools of Ornamental Art, by the Art Superintendent:—

1. The works of the students in all the Government Schools of Ornamental Art have this year, for the second time, been exhibited together, for comparison and inspection. The object, however, has not been to show by their numbers the amount of labour in each school, but by such a selection as should adequately represent the state of all the classes to test the general character and tendency of the instruction given. By this means the position achieved by each school can be fairly estimated, and attention called to deficiencies and errors—which, although varied in each, can hardly be entirely avoided in any—while such deficiencies and errors will thus be remedied and future progress ensured. In making the selections for these collected works, the master of each school was required, for the first time, and at a short notice, to forward a defined number of works from each of his classes, rather than, as heretofore, to send up an unlimited amount of the labours of the school. The Appendix contains in a tabular form the number of works required from each school, and the manner in which the requisition was responded to.

This selection was confided to the master as, above all others, interested in placing the instruction given in the fairest light. The number of works required, and the classes to be represented, have been arranged in proportion to the nature of the school, and the amount of Government grant made to its support, and was thought to be sufficient to mark the general character of the teaching.

This required number of works has, with one or two marked exceptions, been mostly complied with: where there has been a want of class examples, or where the schools have been but lately organised, such as those at Stourbridge, Macclesfield, and Worcester, deficiencies from such causes were of necessity unavoidable.

2. It has been thought necessary to require the productions of every class for comparison and inspection, commencing even with those which are of the most initiative character; for experience has shown, that where such classes are not made of great importance and most carefully taught, the advanced classes are never found in a thoroughly satisfactory state. In this view the most elementary class of ornament, that of “outlines drawn from outline examples,” is one of the most important of the whole course; since, when well conducted, it gives a right direction to all after teaching. This is especially evident in the works from Manchester, the Metropolitan schools, and the schools in the Potteries, where the studies in this class are of great excellence; a sense of perfection is evident throughout the works of these schools, and the advanced classes are well represented; showing careful drawing, and a proper understanding and appreciation of the skeleton or constructing lines of the ornament, as well as being skillfully completed in light, shadow, or colour; whilst it is necessary to remark, that the defective state of this class of “outlines from outline examples” at Coventry is connected with the absence of general excellence in the works of other classes. It is true that great individual excellence may be found where such careful initiative instruction is wanting; but this may fairly be considered to arise from individual talent in the student, while general excellence in a class, or school which is but an aggregate of classes, is only attained where the initiative training is careful and precise.

3. With a view to the inculcation of a thorough sense of proportion and symmetry, the class of Practical Geometry has been placed as the commencing class of the studies of the schools. The masters appear generally to have felt its importance as the basis of all true ornament; and many of the sets of examples sent up have been thought worthy of